

IN THE CLAIMS

1(Previously amended). A cell line capable of differentiating into chondrocytes and capable of differentiating into adipocytes, which cell is derived from a normal adult animal.

2(Original). The cell line of claim 1 wherein the normal adult animal is a normal adult mouse.

3(Previously amended). The cell line of claim 1, which is derived from undifferentiated mesenchymal cells.

4(Previously amended). The cell line of claim 21, which bears accession No. FERM BP-5823.

5(Previously amended). A method for screening for a cell differentiation-controlling material, comprising:

contacting a compound or a mixture of compounds with the cell line of claim 1 to screen for a cell differentiation-controlling material; and

determining the capability of the compound or the mixture of compounds to induce differentiation of the cell line.

6(Original). The method of Claim 5 wherein the cell differentiation-controlling material is a material controlling differentiation into chondrocytes or adipocytes, a material controlling destruction of cartilage tissues or a material controlling calcification of chondrocytes.

7(Previously amended). The screening method of Claim 5 wherein the material screened for is a gene.

8 (Previously amended). A kit for screening for a cell differentiation-controlling material, comprising the cell line of claim 1 and a reagent for detecting changes of properties of the cell line which may be caused by the action of a candidate cell differentiation-controlling material to be screened.

9 (Original). The kit of Claim 8 wherein the cell differentiation-controlling material is a material controlling differentiation into chondrocytes or adipocytes, a material controlling destruction of cartilage tissues or a material controlling calcification of chondrocytes.

Claims 10-13 (Cancelled)

14 (Original). The cell line of claim 2, which is derived from undifferentiated mesenchymal cells.

15 (Previously amended). A method for screening for a cell differentiation-controlling material, comprising:

contacting a compound or a mixture of compounds with the cell line of claim 14 to screen for a cell differentiation-controlling material; and  
determining the capability of the compound or the mixture of compounds to induce differentiation of the cell line.

16(Original). A method for screening for a cell differentiation-controlling material, comprising using the cell line of claim 4.

17(Original). The screening method of claim 6 wherein the material screened for is a gene.

18(Previously amended). A kit for screening for a cell differentiation-controlling material, comprising the cell line of claim 4 and a reagent for detecting changes of properties of the cell line which may be caused by the action of a candidate cell differentiation-controlling material to be screened.

Claims 19-20 (Cancelled)

21(Previously Added). The cell line of claim 1, which is derived from cells of the crural bones.

22(Previously Added). The cell line of claim 1, selected from the group consisting of cell lines from femoral bones, cranial bones, trachea, auricles, nose, intervertebral disks, and heart.

23(New). A cell derived from a normal adult animal, which in the absence of dexamethasone is capable of differentiating into chondrocytes and is capable of differentiating into adipocytes.

24(New). The cell line of claim 23 wherein the normal adult animal is a normal adult mouse.

25(New). The cell line of claim 23, which is derived from undifferentiated mesenchymal cells.